

## Jimmy Smith - House Party (1958)

Written by bluesever

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01. *Au Privave* 02. *Lover Man* 03. *Just Friends* 04. *Blues After All* [download](#) 05. *Confirmation*

Line Up: Jimmy Smith (organ) Lou Donaldson, George Coleman (alto saxophone) Tina Brooks (tenor saxophone) Lee Morgan (trumpet) Curtis Fuller (trombone) Kenny Burrell, Eddie McFadden (guitar) Art Blakey, Donald Bailey (drums)

In 2000 when Blue Note upgraded 1958's House Party as part of the label's superior Rudy Van Gelder series, they augmented the title with a ten-plus minute driving blow of Charlie Parker's "Confirmation" as a well-chosen bonus track. Now the effort is bookended by some primal Bird, which was always a forte of the assembled coterie. In addition to sharing three of the five sides with the RVG edition of The Sermon! (1958), there are two selections from the August 25, 1957, confab of Lee Morgan (trumpet), George Coleman (alto sax), Curtis Fuller (trombone), Eddie McFadden (guitar), Kenny Burrell (guitar), and Donald Bailey (drums). The remaining three were recorded precisely six months later on February 25, 1958, with a slightly amended lineup featuring altoist Lou Donaldson (in for Coleman) alongside Tina Brooks (tenor sax) and the ubiquitous Art Blakey (drums) providing unique contributions of their own. "Au Privave" is a refined piece of indisputable bop mastery as Smith commands the combo through an incendiary and driving rendition that grooves unforced flair and organic charisma. Morgan bandies about with Smith and Brooks behind the flowing support of the amended rhythm section of Blakey and Burrell. Even at 16-plus minutes, the pace and timbre of the performance begs for more. "Lover Man" is splendid and sincere as Donaldson drives right to the heart, unreeling stunningly lyrical leads behind Smith's distinguished progressions. "Just Friends" is a true gem and one of the two cuts not duplicated on The Sermon! Beginning with McFadden, each musician is given room to stretch and reveal his identity as both an ensemble player and soloist. "Blues After All" is a soulful outing that offers up arguably the most sublime and understated bop on the album. Concluding House Party is the aforementioned cover of Bird's "Confirmation," which is as stinging and incisive as its opening counterpart. It also questions why one should spend time reading about genius when the real pleasure lies in the experience of hearing it. ---Lindsay Planer, allmusic.com

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